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**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Order Instituting Rulemaking
Regarding Broadband Infrastructure
Deployment and to Support Service
Providers in the State of California.

Rulemaking 20-09-001
(Filed August 06, 2021)

**MOTION OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
FOR PARTY STATUS**

August 27, 2021

Geoffrey Neill
Legislative Representative
California State Association of Counties
1100 K St., Ste. 101
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel: 916-327-7500 ext. 567
E-mail: gneill@counties.org

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I. Introduction

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) respectfully moves for party status in this Rulemaking (R.) 20-09-001 (Broadband Infrastructure). This Motion is filed and served pursuant to Rule 1.4(a) and (b) of the California Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) Rules of Practice and Procedure.

II. Description of CSAC (Rule 1.4(b)(1))

CSAC is a nonprofit mutual benefit corporation under the California Nonprofit Mutual Benefit Corporation Law. CSAC is a lobbying, advocacy and service organization which represents all 58 counties of the State of California. CSAC is focused on advancing the vital public interest in effective, efficient, and responsive local government. CSAC, under the name of the County Supervisors Association of California began meeting in 1895 and was later renamed CSAC in 1991 and is based in Sacramento, California. CSAC’s long-term objective is to significantly improve the fiscal health of all California counties so they can adequately meet the demand for vital public programs and services.

III. CSAC’s Interest in this Proceeding (Rule 1.4(b)(2))

CSAC represents county government before the California Legislature, administrative agencies, regulatory bodies, and the federal government. CSAC’s long-term objective is to significantly improve the fiscal health of all California counties so they can adequately meet the demand for vital public programs and services. Closing California’s digital divide is a critical component in achieving this objective.

For years, CSAC has advocated for reliable broadband infrastructure to close the digital divide as quickly and completely as possible. Recognizing that the importance of broadband became glaringly more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, the CSAC Board of Directors in December 2020 adopted increased broadband funding as one of the Association's top priorities and formed the CSAC Broadband Working Group to guide its advocacy efforts. CSAC advocated for an investment of \$8 billion in broadband infrastructure and adoption efforts, eventually creating and leading a coalition that supported the passage of SB 156, which provides a \$6 billion investment in broadband infrastructure, including \$3.25 billion for the open-access middle-mile network that is the subject of Rulemaking 20-09-001.

CSAC is deeply committed to closing California's digital divide and recognizes that a statewide open-access middle-mile network is a critical step towards increasing connectivity and affordability for all. This commitment is demonstrated in Chapter 5 of the California County Platform:

"Counties support the expansion of broadband (high speed internet service) to all parts of the state to drive economic development and job opportunities, support county service delivery, and improve health, education, and public safety outcomes for residents. Broadband must be capable of supporting current technology standards and speeds in order for counties to realize these benefits. This may require infrastructure solutions specific to a given county or region. Access and adoption are both necessary elements that should be supported in state and federal legislative and regulatory proposals."

CSAC has a deep interest in providing public comment on this proceeding and anticipates being able to offer comments related to those "Issues for Public Comment" identified on pages 4 through 7 of the Assigned Commissioner's Ruling dated August 6, 2021.

IV. Requested Relief

For the reasons stated above, CSAC has a direct and substantial interest in the Broadband Infrastructure proceeding. CSAC, therefore, moves the Commission to grant CSAC party status in R.20-09-001 (Broadband Infrastructure) for the purpose of participating actively in the proceeding, including participation in all hearings and workshops, submission of all authorized formal pleadings (i.e., comments and briefs), and participation in all other matters scheduled and required in this proceeding. In addition, CSAC intends to submit Comments on the Assigned Commissioner's Ruling, issued in this proceeding on August 6, 2021.

CSAC further asks that the service list include as a party, and all communications be made to, the following representative for CSAC.

Geoffrey Neill
California State Association of Counties
1100 K St., Ste. 101
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel: 916-327-7500 ext. 567
E-mail: gneill@counties.org

V. Conclusion

CSAC's participation in this proceeding will not prejudice any party and will not delay the schedule or broaden the scope of the issues in the proceeding. For the reasons stated above, CSAC respectfully requests that the CPUC grant this Motion for Party Status filing.

Dated: August 27, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Geoffrey Neill
Geoffrey Neill
Legislative Representative
California State Association of Counties
1100 K St., Ste. 101
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel: 916-327-7500 ext. 567
E-mail: gneill@counties.org